The independent claims:

12. (currently amended) A device for allowing training and inhibitory relaxation of neck muscles, said device comprising:

An elongated member shaped to fit around the neck of an individual; and

A grasping mechanism on opposing ends of said elongated member for allowing an individual to grasp said elongated member as said elongated member is wrapped around the neck of the individual

Wherein said elongated member has a resilient portion

Wherein said resilient portion applies contact forces to surfaces of the upper back, neck and lower skull of the individual

Wherein at least some of the contact forces substantially oppose each other.

18. (currently amended) A device for allowing training and inhibitory relaxation of neck and upper thoracic muscles of an individual, said device comprising:

An inflatable member shaped to fit around the neck of an individual; and

Finger holes formed on opposing ends of said device to allow an individual to grasp the device with the hands of their arms crossed over the front of their body

Wherein the inflatable member applies contact forces to surfaces of the upper back, neck and lower skull of the individual

Wherein at least some of the contact forces substantially oppose each other.

28. (currently amended) A device for allowing exercise of the neck muscles, said device comprising:

An elongated top member

An elongated bottom member

A sealing mechanism for sealing said top member to said bottom member in such a way as to create an air tight cavity

Wherein said airtight cavity can be positioned to apply contact forces to surfaces of the upper back, neck and lower skull of an individual

Wherein at least some of the contact forces substantially oppose each other.

31. (currently amended) A resilient neck and upper thoracic spinal region training device for ~~a patient~~ an individual, comprising: a flexible, resilient, generally elongated member having two ends; and a means for securing the device around the neck and upper spinal region

Wherein the elongated member can be secured so as to apply contact forces to surfaces of the lower skull, neck and upper spinal region

Wherein at least some of the contact forces substantially oppose each other.

39. (currently amended) An elastically compressible neck and upper thoracic spinal region training device for ~~a patient~~ an individual, comprising:

Means for providing reciprocal inhibition of primary mover muscles; and

Means for isolating core stabilizer musculature of the neck and upper thoracic spine for strengthening

Means for applying contact forces to the lower skull, neck and upper thoracic region

Wherein at least some of the contact forces substantially oppose each other to cause a partial tractioning effect on the neck.

43. (currently amended) An effective, low cost, easy to manufacture device for promoting strength and flexibility in deep postural muscles in ~~a patient~~ an individual comprising:

An elongated member having a low spring coefficient and two ends; and

Handhold means for securing the device located on either end of the elongated member

Wherein the device can be secured so as to apply contact forces to the lower skull, neck and upper spinal region of an individual

Wherein at least some of the contact forces substantially oppose each other to cause a partial tractioning effect on the neck.